

REMARKS

The claims now pending in the application are Claims 13 to 18, the independent claims being Claims 13 and 16.

In the Official Action dated May 31, 2000, Claim 13 to 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e), as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,377,051 (Lane). Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection respectfully are requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.

The present application is a continuation of U.S. Patent No. 08/320,833 filed October 7, 1994, now U.S. Patent No. 5,903,703, issued May 11, 1999; the '833 application in turn is a continuation of U.S. Application No. 07/935,908 filed August 27, 1992. The '908 application claims priority to Japanese Patent Application No. 3-217020, filed August 28, 1991; a Claim To Priority, including certified copies of the Japanese priority documents was filed on November 29, 1993, in Application No. 07/935,908.

Applicant notes that the Lane '051 patent issued December 27, 1994, subsequent to the earliest U.S. filing date of U.S. Application No. 08/320,833. Accordingly, without conceding the propriety of the rejection, the

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specification has been amended to recite the claimed priority data. No new matter has been added.

For the above reasons, Applicant submits that the Lane '051 patent is not prior art against the present application, and that independent Claims 13 and 16 are allowable over the prior art of record.

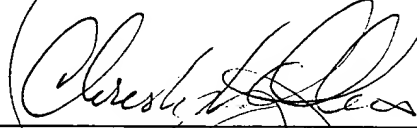
Claims 14, 15, 17 and 18 depend from Claims 13 and 16, respectively, and are believed allowable for the same reasons. Moreover, each of these dependent claims recites additional features in combination with the features of independent Claims 13 and 16, and is believed allowable in its own right. Individual consideration of the dependent claims respectfully is requested.

Applicant believes that the present Amendment is responsive to each of the points raised by the Examiner in the Official Action, and submits that the application is in allowable form. Favorable consideration of the claims and passage to issue of the present application at the Examiner's earliest convenience earnestly are solicited.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010.

All correspondence should continue to be directed to our  
below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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Attorney for Applicant

Registration No. 32,078

FITZPATRICK, CELLA, HARPER & SCINTO  
30 Rockefeller Plaza  
New York, New York 10112-3801  
Facsimile: (212) 218-2200

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